

error in a medicine, or in the time of administering it; if they are constrained to watch the eye of the physician, and await his answers as the decisions of life or death? If that child be taken from them, how will it increase their agony to think that his death depended upon such an error or such an oversight which might have been prevented.—No, there can be no peace except for him who trusts in that God who holds in his hand the thread of all events, who makes them all work together for good to them that love God, and who was pleased to tell us in his love, *the very hairs on your head are numbered: fear ye not therefore.*

With regard to spiritual things, can we be happy confiding in ourselves, in a world where we meet with continual objects of temptation, where Satan incessantly roams about our path with the subtilty of a serpent, and the rage of a lion, and when we continually carry with us a heart which is a world of iniquity? And where is the peace, where is the repose of that man who trusts in himself, and places not his confidence in the Lord? He goes round a continual and wearying circle of resolutions, and falls. A fall leads to a new resolution, which he hopes will be more lasting than the preceding, and this is followed by new falls as great as the former. If it seems sometimes, that shame for his continual relapses gives him a degree of energy which enables him to carry off a momentary victory, he soon succumbs again, and is plunged as deep as ever in the mire where he finds no footing. His punishment resembles that of the unhappy man whom the pagan fable represents as condemned to roll to the top of a mountain a ponderous stone, which, every time he approaches the summit, escapes from his hands, and rolls back to the point from which he started, thus renewing continually his toilsome and ineffectual labour. So long as we place not our confidence in the Lord; so long as we commit not our heart into his hands who is *greater than our heart*, who alone can change it, and turn it as he pleases; the heart being the same, continually leads into the same errors, *for out of it are the issues of life.* My will is not master of my will, and until, by a dependance upon God, I have obtained that *his strength should be perfected in my weakness*, until his irresistible voice has calmed and subdued my passions, I shall be like the *troubled sea which cannot rest, and whose waters cast up mire and dirt.* If wearied by so many unavailing efforts, a man receive not a lesson of confidence in God, he must either end by despair or by a hardness of heart similar to that of the Jews, who in the time of Jeremiah, answered the prophet, *There is no hope, but we will walk after our*

*own devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart.* Jer. xviii. 12.

We have rather described the misery of the man who trusts not in the Lord, than the happiness of the man who puts his confidence in him, because the happiness of confiding in the Lord appears in a manner to prove itself. To say of a man that he trusts in the Lord, seems to say without any need of proving it, that he is a happy man. Hence the Scripture contents itself with frequently repeating: *Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.* To trust is to repose, to trust in the Lord is to repose upon the wisest, the most powerful, the most tender, the most faithful of friends. Can you, then, doubt that the man who trusts in the Lord is happy? Must not he be happy, who, to every anxious thought about the future that rises in his mind, can answer: *My Heavenly Father knoweth what things I have need of; who, to every difficulty that he meets, says, while he looks to Jesus crucified on Calvary: In the mount the Lord shall be found. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* You may see the Christian in heaviness for a season (*if need be*), through manifold temptations; but you will find him like Paul, *sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; perplexed, yet not in despair; cast down, yet not destroyed.* When the Christian finds himself in situations, apparently the most hopeless; when every thing within him and without him appears dark and stormy; his trust in the promises of God shall be to him like *the bow in the cloud, a sign between him and his God*, that he need not fear to be overwhelmed by the flood. It shall be to him *an anchor of the soul both sure and stedfast, which is cast within the vail, whither our forerunner, even Jesus, is entered for us.* When the eye of sense sees no way of escape, the eye of faith and of hope finds one in the glorious promise which assures the child of God that his Father “will not suffer him to be tempted above what he is able, but will with the temptation make a way to escape, that he may be able to bear it.”—2 Cor. x. 13.

Oh, happy children of God, who are partakers of this confidence and rejoicing of hope! In traversing this earth, where “man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward,” it cannot be, but you shall have your share of those sorrows which are common to the posterity of Adam, and of those afflictions which are peculiar to the people of God; it cannot be but that you shall weep with other men. But thanks be to God, you “sorrow not as those that have no hope.” “Where your affliction aboundeth, your